

Ava, Missouri
May 27, 1996

Chaplain Leonard P. Edwards
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It seems appropriate that I should be writing this on Memorial Day. Too often we never know whether the service we perform produces results or not. I feel that this is particularly true of the ministry you have rendered over the years. I hope to show you that your ministry did impact my life, and I feel very sure, that of many others.

I was a pilot assigned to the 458th Bomb Group, 755th Squadron, in the early days in Boise, Idaho. I went through crew training there, then Wendover, and at Tonopah. We went from there to Horsham St. Faith, via South America, Africa, and to England, arriving at Horsham in January 1944. As you know, the Group became operational at the end of February. My crew completed our 30 missions on D-Day, June 6, 1944. Coincidentally, that was also my 5th wedding anniversary.

I remember that you always saw us off on our missions and said a prayer for us. I was a bit skeptical at the time, wondering how prayers for us would balance out with those of a chaplain on the other side. I wondered what would cause God to choose us for protection. However, your prayers dispelled that confusion. You said the prayer that has helped to shape my life. I have quoted you in management, in training sessions, command decisions, etc., many times. You asked that we would do our duty in such a way that we would not in any way dishonor nor tarnish the uniform we wore nor the Country we served. That, sir, is a creed that any man should be honored to claim.

I believe I am correct that you even volunteered for a mission and because of aircraft damage you had to bail out over merry old England.

I have tried to live up to that creed, not always successfully I fear, but I have always remembered your words and have tried to do it.

For years I have wished I could let you know how you influenced my life, but until your article appeared in the current issue of the 2 AD Journal, I had no idea how to do so. Evelyn Cohen kindly gave me your address and I hope this reaches you at last. Thank you for your inspiration to others. I feel you are entitled to know the good you did. I know I am forever in your debt.

Sincerely,


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